

Residential Care Empowerment

Department: Counseling and Recreation

Priority: Non-regular class

Overall purpose of class:

The architecture, structured activities and group room in the Residential Care facility where this class is held tend to support isolation. This course provides an arena for peer support, exercise and group empowerment. This is a two-hour class held weekly in eight-week blocks of time. It provides an hour for coming together for peer support and facilitated socialization followed by one hour of yoga.

Course goals are:

- Peer Support
- Community-building
- Stress reduction
- Cognitive stimulation
- Awareness of outside community and current national and world affairs
- Empowerment for self and group advocacy

Number of classes held per week:

The class is held once a week at the facility.

Optimum class time:

Late morning after morning rounds is an optimum time.

Instructor requirements:

Center counselor, yoga instructor and residential care I support team.

Number of students:

20

Student ability range and limitations:

Accommodates any student with a desire to be in the group and who is willing to share.

Space and Equipment requirements:

Cooperative and motivated facility team and their setting.

Student needs to be met from the perspective of the instructor:

Many residential care residents, especially those who are cognitively aware of the dangers of isolationism and the basic human need for social interaction, need a consistent caring person who listens and genuinely enjoys their company.

Student Goals:

- To reduce stress
- To get a different perspective
- To discuss issues and discover ways of individual and group problem-solving
- To make friends and socialize
- To share spiritual activities

Success Story: The sidewalk is there!!

October 13, 2004

Care-home residents rally

Pleasant Care residents demonstrate along the Soquel Avenue frontage road Tuesday to call attention to the lack of a sidewalk. (Dan Coyro / Sentinel)

LIVE OAK — Each time residents at Pleasant Care nursing home on Soquel Avenue venture out to shop at nearby businesses, they feel they're taking their lives into their hands.

The lack of a sidewalk along the frontage road for a block between the center and the entrance to Highway 1 forces the seniors and disabled nursing-care residents to travel in a bicycle lane, at the mercy of inattentive and aggressive drivers.

"We want a way to get to the bus stop at Seventh Avenue, which is a half-mile away, safely," said Kurtis Lempke, resident-council president and five-year resident of the home. "And a lot of people here do a lot of business on Soquel (Avenue)."

Tuesday, as part of an empowerment class taught by the Cabrillo College Stroke Center, residents held a rally and traveled the treacherous route identifying problems and solutions along the way.

They've been working with county Supervisor Jan Beautz to make the path safer. So far, she has spoken with the county's Redevelopment Agency about installing sidewalks along Soquel at Seventh, she said. Those could be installed next spring, she said.

But getting sidewalks in front of Pleasant Care and its neighbors is tricky because of attempts to widen Highway 1. If that happens, it may require Soquel to be redesigned, she said.

To compensate for this, she suggested making the area a no-parking zone, so residents can travel further away from fast-moving vehicles. There's also the option of widening narrow parts of the path, she said.

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